

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1195

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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SUBJ: PRIMEMINISTER NORDLI UNDERSCORES DANGERS TO NORWAY
SECURITY IN ICELAND -UK FISHERIES CONFLICT

REFS: (A)OSLO 0915, (V) OSLO 0758

SUMMARY: IN HIS FIRST MAJOR STATEMENT ON FOREIGN
POLICY PRIME MINISTER NORDLI EMPHASIZED THE CRITICAL
IMPORTANCE OF SETTLEMENT OF THE ICELAND-UK FISHERIES
DISPUTE TO NORWAY'S AND EAST-WEST SECURITY. HE OUT-
LINED NORWAY'S GENERAL APPROACH TO THE DISPUTED MAKING
IT CLEAR THAT FURTHER ESCALATION OF THE SECURITY ISSUE
WAS A DANGER TO OVERALL STABILITY IN THE NORTH
ATLANTIC. THE PRIME MINISTER COMMENTED ADDITIONALLY
ON EUROPEAN RELATIONS GENERALLY, INCLUDING NORWEGIAN
SUPPORT FOR NATO, CSCE FOLLOW-UP, MBFR SUCCESS AND
HELP TO PORTUGAL AND SPAIN. EMB SUMMARY.

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1. PRIME MINISTER ODVAR NORDLI USED OCCASION OF HIS FIRST MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY SPEECH TO EMPHASIZE TO NORWEGIANS THE DIRECT DANGERS TO THEIR SECURITY OF THE ICELAND/UK FISHERIES DISPUTE. SPEAKING TO A MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN MOVEMENT ON FEB 23, NORDLI STRESSED THE THREAT TO NORWEGIAN SECURITY POSED BY A CONTINUED ESCALATION OF THE FISHERIES DISPUTE.

2. NORDLI POINTED OUT THAT HE WAS GLAD THAT THE ICELANDIC GOVERNMENT HAS SOUGHT TO LIMIT THE CONFLICT SO THAT NATO MEMBERSHIP AND THE KEFLAVIK BASE ARE NOT AFFECTED, AND HE STATED HE THOUGHT IT ESSENTIAL THAT ALL PARTIES PROCEED WITH DELIBERATION AND MODERATION SO THAT THE FISHERIES DISPUTE DOES NOT LEAD TO A LONG TERM WEAKENING OF SECURITY IN THE NORTH.

3. NORDLI LAID OUT FIRMLY THE KEY STRATEGIC LOCATION OF ICELAND AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE KEFLAVIK BASE, WHICH, HE SAID, LINKS NORWAY TO ITS PRIMARY BASE OF SUPPORT--THE US--AND PROVIDES THE MARITIME SURVEILLANCE SIGNIFICANT TO PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC.

4. WHILE NOTING THAT NORWAY WAS UNHAPPY TO SEE GOOD FRIENDS IN CONFLICT, HE SAID THE ISSUE WAS ESPECIALLY SERIOUS FOR ICELAND BECAUSE OF ITS GREATER DEPENDENCE ON FISH THAN ANY OTHER COUNTRY.

5. NORWAY WAS FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS IN THE DISPUTE CLOSELY AND HAD OFFERED ITS ASSISTANCE TO THE PARTIES TO HELP SETTLE THE DISPUTE, HE SAID.

BUT HE ADDED IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE FOR NORWAY OR OTHER OUTSIDE PARTIES TO PREVENT THE UNFORTUNATE BREACH IN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS THAT HAD OCCURRED. THE PRIME MINISTER MADE NO MENTION OF ADDITIONAL STEPS NORWAY MIGHT TAKE TO HELP RESOLVE THE DISPUTE.

6. ON EUROPE GENERALLY NORDLI OUTLINED A BALANCE OF NORWAY'S POLITICAL INTEREST ITS MEMBERSHIP IN

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THE NATO ALLIANCE. NORWAY, HE SAID, IS NEIGHBOR TO ONE SUPERPOWER AND ALLIED TO THE OTHER. WHILE NORWAY DEPENDS UPON US SUPPORT IT NEEDS NEIGHBORLY RELATIONS WITH THE USSR, AND HE SAW GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO SUPER POWERS OF HIGH IMPORTANCE TO NORWAY'S SECURITY INTERESTS. HE SAID THE CSCE ACCORD MARKED AN END TO AN SPOCK IN EUROPE AND THE BEGINNING OF A NEW, AND HE PROMISED CONTINUED NOR-

WEGIAN SUPPORT FOR CSCE FOLLOW-UP AND MBFR SUCCESS.

7. TOWARD EUROPE TO THE SOUTH, HE SAID NORWAY'S POLICY MUST BE BASED ON A FOUNDATION OTHER THAN EEC MEMBERSHIP. BUT NORWEGIAN REJECTION OF MEMBERSHIP BY NO MEANS RULED OUT COOPERATION WITH THE EEC AND ITS MEMBER COUNTRIES IN A WIDE RANGE OF FIELDS ESSENTIALLY NORWAY, WHICH HE SAID WOULD GO FORWARD. HE CITED DESIRE FOR PORTUGAL AND SPAIN TO BECOME FULLY DEMOCRATIC SOCIETIES AND SAID NORWAY MUST PLAY A ROLE OF ASSISTING DEVELOPMENT TOWARD DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS THERE.

8. COMMENT: NORDLI'S MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY SPEECH WAS A POSITIVE AND FORTHCOMING STATEMENT OF HIS GOVERNMENT'S DESIRE TO FURTHER EXPANDED COOPERATION IN EUROPE. THE PORTION DEALING WITH THE ICELANDIC-UK FISHERIES DISPUTE WAS DESIGNED TO EMPHASIZE THE OVERRIDING CONCERN NORWAY HAS ABOUT THE DISPUTE'S POTENTIAL HARMFUL EFFECT ON THE SECURITY SITUATION IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC AND TO SET FORTH ITS HOPE THAT THE PARTIES WILL ACT QUICKLY TO PREVENT THE FISHERIES CONFLICT FROM ESCALATING INTO THE SECURITY AREA..
BYRNE

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